



State of California  
The Natural Resources Agency  
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

## NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

<b>PROJECT TITLE</b>	Mitchell Mine Fuel Break 16 USFS-WUI 45412		
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>	Sec 1 & 2, T6N, R11E. Sec 25&36, T7N,R11E. Sec 3, T6N,R12E. Sec 26,27,28,29,30,33 &34, T7N, R12E, MDB&M	<b>COUNTY</b>	Amador
<b>LEAD AGENCY</b>	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
<b>CONTACT</b>	Thomas J. Tinsley, Unit Forester-Forester II		
<b>ADDRESS</b>	CAL FIRE Amador-El Dorado Unit 2840 Mt Danaher Road Camino, CA 95709		
		<b>PHONE</b>	530-647-5203

### Project Description

The Mitchell Mine Fuel Break will be constructed as a linear feature approximately 300 feet wide and approximately 7.75 miles long north of the town of Pine Grove. Starting on the east end at Hwy 88 and the Aqueduct Road intersection and running north and west to the intersection of Ridge Road and Hammericks Grade Road. This fuelbreak generally runs along the major ridge lines. The Mitchell Mine shaded Fuel Break will be constructed using a combination of treatments which may include mastication, hand thinning, chipping and pile burning. The objective of the treatment is to reduce surface and ladder fuels, and to achieve canopy spacing to mitigate the threat of wildfire to private property. This project entails removing small trees and brush to create a Fuel Reduction Zone or shaded Fuel Break located on both improved and unimproved residential parcels. The Amador Fire Safe Council has obtained permission from several of the private landowners for this project. The general project has been marked with orange and black strip flagging on the ground in some cases the flagging is only done along one side of the fuel break with the intent that the contractor will treat up to 300 feet from the flag line. Work will be done outside the required defensible space of 100 feet around homes. The project has a wide elevation range (1600'-2600'). Vegetation on site includes conifers (Ponderosa pine, Douglas-fir, Sugar pine, White Fir and Incense cedar), hardwoods (black oak and live oak) and brush species (manzanita, yerba santa, and various ceanothus species).

The project will reduce fuel loads and increase visibility along the narrow and twisting rural canyon roads with little or no shoulders. Upon completion of the project, the following benefits will be received:

- (1) Shorten response times for emergency equipment and crews,
- (2) Provide defensible locations (staging areas, landing zones, shelter zones) for use during emergency incidents,
- (3) Create safe evacuation routes for many Amador County residents and their animals,
- (4) As a result of increased visibility and reduction of hiding cover along roadsides, reduce wildlife mortality as a result of vehicular collisions.
- (5) Create a shaded fuel break in a location that will greatly benefit residents in the Pine Grove and surrounding areas.

Sub-goals to attain the primary goal of saving lives are:

- Reduce fuels along roads in Amador County to improve ingress and egress.
- Provide signage at critical intersections to assist ingress/egress.
- Improve access to water sources for efficient fire control operations.
- Reduce fuels at vital locations to develop/improve staging areas, landing zones, shelter zones, all of which are defensible space from which to make a stand against wildfire.



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### EXEMPTION STATUS

- ☒ Categorical Exemption Type/Section: CEQA Article 19 Categorical Exemptions  
15304 pertaining to fuels reduction
- ☐ Statutory Exemption (state code section):
- ☐ Ministerial (§21080(b)(1); 15268)
- ☐ Declared Emergency (§21080(b)(3); 15269(a))
- ☐ Emergency Project (§21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c))

### REASONS PROJECT IS EXEMPT

This project fits under portions of CEQA Article 19 Categorical Exemptions 15304 Minor Alterations to Land, pertaining to fuels reduction

Field review by CAL FIRE staff on April 25, 2018, confirmed that no exceptions apply which would preclude the use of a Notice of Exemption for this project. The Department has concluded that no significant environmental impact would occur to aesthetics, agriculture and forestland/timberland, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use planning, mineral resources, noise, population and housing, public services, recreation, transportation/traffic, or to utilities and service systems. Documentation of the environmental review completed by the Department is kept on file at Amador El Dorado Unit headquarters in Camino.

### DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING

Governor's Office of Planning & Research  
JUN 11 2018  
STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

 6/8/18

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Helge Eng, Deputy Director Date  
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection